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AGENDA FOR JOBS

Rep. Dave Upthegrove

AGENDA FOR JOBS

*2004 Legislative action-plan to create jobs
and a strong economy in South King County*

Dear friends & neighbors,

My top priority in the 2004 legislative session will be to ensure a strong economy and create jobs in South King County. A healthy growing economy provides people with jobs, opportunity, and hope for the future, and generates revenue for progressive priorities such as public education, health care, and environmental protection.

I supported aggressive steps this past year to help the Boeing Company, but I believe we need to help all businesses — large and small. The manufacturing sector is the anchor of the Kent economy. Nationally, however, we are losing millions of manufacturing jobs — in part due to competition from China and other nations with emerging economies.

We will never be able to compete with these foreign countries if we engage in a “race to the bottom” by gutting environmental and labor laws to try to produce cheaper products.

In the new global age, we also cannot engage in the old approach of isolating ourselves by putting up barriers to international competition — because we depend upon foreign markets to buy our goods.

Instead, we need new innovative solutions. We need to recognize our strengths include our educated workforce and high-tech capabilities. We can compete globally and create jobs by staying “ahead of the curve” in higher education and high-tech research and development.

To this end, I present my Agenda for Jobs for the upcoming 2004 legislative session — a progressive action plan to create jobs and a strong economy in South King County. I would welcome your input, feedback and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Dave Upthegrove

Dave Upthegrove



Dave Upthegrove
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AGENDA FOR JOBS

1. Provide Tax Incentives for High-Tech Research & Development
2. Strengthen Higher Education System
3. Create a Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Kent
4. Make Additional Strategic Transportation Investments
5. Provide new local economic development tools

See inside for details on each item

Representative Dave Upthegrove • 33rd District

AGENDA FOR JOBS ITEM #1

Provide Tax Incentives for High-Tech Research & Development

Washington State currently provides a business & occupation (B&O) tax credit and a sales tax exemption for high-tech research and development. These important economic incentives are scheduled to expire next year unless the 2004 Legislature takes action to renew them.

These incentives have been effective at attracting and retaining businesses and creating jobs in our community, and I feel strongly that they should be fully renewed – not reduced or eliminated.

Extending the research and development tax credits is essential for our local manufacturing sector to remain competitive, which in the long run, will create high-wage jobs in our community and increase revenue for government funding priorities.



AGENDA FOR JOBS ITEM #2

Strengthen Higher Education System

Our highly-skilled and well-educated workforce is a valuable asset for local businesses. Our higher education system in Washington State needs to be strengthened and adjusted to ensure a workforce on the cutting edge of the emerging technologies.

We need to provide affordable access to Highline and Green River Community Colleges, which offer innovative programs to meet the changing needs of the local economy. We also need to expand the advanced technical degrees offered at our four-year Universities. Specifically, I propose that we expand programs partnering regional universities, branch campuses, and private universities with community colleges to grant baccalaureate degrees in engineering and technology.



AGENDA FOR JOBS ITEM #3

Create a Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Kent

Recognizing the importance of innovation, research and development in the manufacturing sector, the Kent Chamber of Commerce has embarked upon an effort to create a Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Kent. I propose that the State of Washington become a partner in the project by providing capital funds through the department of Community Trade and Economic Development.

The Center for Advanced Manufacturing will help our region remain competitive in the ever expanding global market place by providing a clearing house of information on best practices, disseminating national research, and offering ongoing training, curriculum materials and courses.



AGENDA FOR JOBS ITEM #4

Make Additional Strategic Transportation Investments

The Kent Valley is the 2nd largest warehouse and distribution center on the West Coast—nearby the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma. Our local economy depends upon the ability of businesses to get their goods to market. The two railroad lines on the Valley floor cause congestion and delays as vehicles move East-West out of the Valley onto SR-167 or I-5.

We need additional new state funding for local freight mobility projects—such as overpasses over railroad tracks in key freight corridors. I propose that we create a dedicated funding source earmarked for strategic freight mobility projects that boost our economy and create jobs. The top priority will be the 228th Street corridor—to create an overpass over the rail tracks similar to the successful 272nd Street project.



AGENDA FOR JOBS ITEM #5

Provide new local economic development tools

Cities such as Kent play a vital role in attracting new business and jobs by providing infrastructure (roads, utilities, land) to prepare for new business investments. I propose that we allow cities to borrow money from the State for infrastructure improvements needed for economic development. The cities would secure the loans with the future increase in tax revenue from the new development.

This expanded form of “tax-increment financing” has been effective at promoting economic development in 47 other states. The City of Kent is in a prime position to benefit from this tool, which we ought to implement here in Washington.